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695 truth?" And the answer is *Akloosko Ke-e-u-que-Ho*, "I do not lie; I do not, of a certain truth."[77] Regarding epithets he says, "the sharpest and most lasting affront, the most opprobrious, indelible epithet, with which one Indian can possibly brand another, is to call him in public company, *Hoobuk Waske*, Eunuchus, praeputio detecto."[78]

GENERAL CUSTOMS

000 In treating of the general customs of the Creeks it will be well to keep in mind certain cycles. Thus there were customs that concerned the cycle of human life itself, including the important events incident to existence, such as birth, puberty, marriage, and death. There were certain others determined by the annual cycle of the seasons, and still others by the shorter cycle of day and night. Beyond these there were still other customs independent of changes in life or nature. It will be as well to take up the customs concerned with events incident to human life in the first place, and then proceed to the rest.

The Vital Cycle

PUBERTY AND CHILDBIRTH

•841 [846] The regulations imposed upon a woman at the time of her monthly periods and at childbirth resembled each other in many particulars and may be conveniently treated together. Adair's account is the oldest. It applies primarily to the Chickasaw, but there was little difference between their usages and those of the Creeks. He says:

". . . They oblige their women in their *lunar retreats*, to build small huts, at as considerable a distance from their dwelling-houses, as they imagine may be out of the enemies reach; where, during the space of that period, they are obliged to stay at the risque of their lives. Should they be known to violate that ancient law, they must answer for every misfortune that befalls any of the people, as a certain effect of the divine fire; though the lurking enemy sometimes kills them in their religious retirement. Notwithstanding they reckon it conveys a most horrid and dangerous pollution to those who touch or go near them, or walk anywhere within the circle of their retreats; and are in fear of thereby spoiling the supposed purity and power of their holy ark, which they always carry to war; yet the enemy believe they can so cleanse themselves with the consecrated herbs, roots, etc. which the chieftain carries in the beloved war-ark, as to secure them in this point from bodily danger, because it was done against their enemies.

"The non-observance of this separation, a breach of the marriage-law, and murder, they esteem the most capital crimes. When the time of the women's separation is ended, they always purify them-

[77] Adair, Hist. Am. Inds., p. 51. [78] Ibid., p. 136.

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selves in deep running water, return home, dress, and anoint themselves. They ascribe these monthly periods to the female structure, not to the anger of *Ishtohoollo Aba*.

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"Correspondent to the Mosaic law of women's purification after *travail*, the Indian women absent themselves from their husbands and all public company, for a considerable time—The *Muskōhge* women are separate for three moons, exclusive of that moon in which they are delivered. . . .

"Should any of the Indian women violate this law of purity, they would be censured, and suffer for any sudden sickness, or death that might happen among the people, as the necessary effect of the divine anger for their polluting sin, contrary to their old traditional law of female purity. Like the greater part of the Israelites, it is the fear of the temporal evils, and the prospect of temporal good, that makes them so tenacious and observant of their laws. At the stated period, the Indian women's impurity is finished by ablution, and they are again admitted to social and holy privileges." [79]

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One of my Creek informants spoke of the monthly course as "a strong disease." I do not know to what extent this represented the former opinion among Creeks generally. His account is as follows:

"When a woman had her monthly course, or when she had a child, she had to go outside and stay four days, or for as many days as it lasted. She lived in a house by herself, used special dishes, ate no large game animals of any kind, and did not go into the garden. She washed and put on entirely new clothing before she came back. If she should go into the garden, people thought the vegetation would be weakened. They thought that the menstrual flow could be sensed at a distance and affect the vitality of men and other creatures. A woman at that period must bathe down stream from a man. She must also pass every man she met in such a way that the wind would not blow from her to him. If these regulations were not observed, it was feared that the man's lungs and blood would be affected and that he would in consequence be weakened for life."

Says Speck, of the Tuskegee:

"During menses the woman remained in seclusion and did not come into contact with anything belonging to her household. At the approach of childbirth she also retired to the seclusion lodge and neither she nor the father resided in the usual house for the period of a month. The mother was allowed to partake of food from the time the child was born, but the father fasted for four days thereafter. For a month after the event, the mother was not allowed to prepare her husband's meals nor to eat or sleep with him, and he on his part was not allowed to touch her." [80]

[79] Adair, Hist. Am. Inds., pp. 133-134. [80] Speck in Mem. Am. Anth. Ass'n, vol. II, p. 116.

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846 The point of particular interest about this quotation is that it contains almost the only reference to a custom resembling the couvade.

Hitchcock's information comes mainly from the Tukabahchee, and is as follows:

"When [a woman] is visited with what is peculiar to the sex . . . she is obliged to occupy a separate tent or house, to eat from separate dishes, and to live entirely apart from all others until it is passed. Then she is taken and thoroughly washed, whether in winter or summer, and returned to the family. The utensils used by her are laid aside until required for a similar purpose. No man is ever allowed to sit in the seat which has been used by a woman under those circumstances.

"At the period of childbirth the woman is obliged to leave the house and the child must be born out of the house, winter or summer. The mother must not enter the house for ten days and must not sleep in it for two months, and if she is taken sick in giving birth to a child she is not allowed to sleep in the house for four months. Before the child is allowed to suckle it is taken to a branch or spring, and water is thrown upon its tongue several times. Children are often bathed in a creek by the time they are a month old. Formerly they were rolled in the snow to make them hardy. When the child is a boy, a physic maker, a sort of priest, is called upon for a preparation which is placed upon the mother's nipple to make the child hardy and brave, and an active ball player."[81]

841 The Alabama living in Texas say that when a woman's monthly sickness (holotci' taye'ha) came on she took a blanket and went away to a small house near some stream or spring to live until it was over. She did her own cooking there and when she drank used her two hands instead of a cup. During that time she might not speak to anyone. When the time was passed she bathed and washed all of her clothes thoroughly before returning home. If she ate with her family without having done this it was thought they would fall sick. At that time a man avoided walking close to a woman for the same reason.

[881] It is the universal testimony that the regulations observed by a girl at her first menstrual period differed in no particular from those undergone by her on every recurring month.

844 When a woman was going to have a child she acted in much the same manner, only she seems not to have camped so far away. She observed the same regulations, however. An old woman acted as midwife, and for some time after its birth the child was bathed every day. Swan's words in the following quotation must not be accepted literally when he says that the young mother was "entirely alone." He says:

[81] Hitchcock, Ms. notes.